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## MY FRIEND CHING.

IN FOUR PARTS.—PART I.

I was the luckiest fellow in Shanghai. Every one, among the juniors at anyrate, coincided in that verdict, while some of the moneyed magnates of our thriving mercantile community shook their grizzled heads, and growled out their bluffly expressed opinion to the effect, that 'a youngster like that fellow Springfield' had no right to be so prosperous. 'Only six years out, and a spade partner already! Born with a silver spoon in his mouth, to be sure—own nephew to Barnet, Pashley, & Co., and be hanged to him!' was the good-natured comment which usually concluded their remarks on my too speedy promotion.

It has been said, and very truly, as it seems to me, that our portraits, as drawn by our enemies, are not unlike. So it is. A vigorous, racy, slashing caricature, something that shall hit off our salient features, and pierce the weakest place in our foibles, is, at anyrate, to be expected from a limner inspired by a strong feeling of personal hatred. Now, I had no enemies in China save one, as yet undreamed of, but the sight of gratuitous good-luck raining down on a young head is gall and wormwood to a disappointed oldster, and hence the grudging fashion in which some of the commercial veterans of Shanghai endured my premature good-fortune. What they said was, in a manner, true. I certainly was not the nephew of the old-established and widely respected firm of Barnet, Pashley, & Co.; but I had the privilege of standing in that relation of life towards 'our Mr Barnet,' of Barnet's Hong, and also of a very stately yamun or palace on the Vermilion Canal, local manager of the grand old house of business. Rich as Samuel Barnet was reputed to be, however, and considerable as was the experience which forty successful years of China commerce had endowed him with, it must not for a moment be supposed that he was the Mr Barnet, senior partner in the great Mincing Lane concern. Strictly speaking, there was now no Barnet. A merchant of the

same name and kindred had established the firm in Canton and London in days when to trade at Shanghai would have been as impossible as it would now be to establish a branch at Timbuctoo, and before the golden pen-feathers of the East India Company's monopoly had been clipped by parliamentary scissors. But many partners had since 'come in,' and of them all, the mysterious entity known as Co. had gradually become paramount. There were three Pashleys yet in the flesh, and one Barnet; and the latter, as an excellent man of business, and a descendant of the founder of the firm, was held in much respect by his home-staying associates in England.

I myself, Harry Springfield, as the only son of Mr Barnet's only sister, had unquestionably had very fair prospects before me when, at the age of nineteen or so, I came out to China to occupy a three-legged stool in the counting-house of Barnet, Pashley, & Co. But I had improved those prospects by hard work and steady application, had been busy when others idled away the sultry hours, had done my best to master the difficult language, and to comprehend the still more difficult national character of the people of that strange country, and had succeeded better than a young man generally does. And although it was quite true that I should not have been so quickly promoted had I not had the good luck to be nearly related to the local chief of the firm, and an inmate of his house, still I had in some degree earned the step by toilsome and perilous journeys, by plodding industry, and by devoting many an hour of recreation to the uninviting task of hammering away, under the guidance of a needy literary graduate or mandarin of the gilt button, at the painful study of the Chinese written—or, more correctly, painted—language.

I had passed little more than six years under the flaming skies, and on the friable yellow soil, of the Celestial Empire, and already was I entitled to write myself a 'spade partner' in our long-established firm. As the precise nature of this dignity may, in the eyes of the uninitiated, not appear to be quite clearly defined, I may as well explain that such

partnership is nearly on a par with brevet rank in the army, conferring no claim to a vote at the board or a share in the profits, although it carries with it the right to a salary such as an ordinary clerk might vainly sigh to draw. A spade partner, like a sergeant, can be reduced to the ranks for misconduct, but it must be by solemn vote of the council of permanent proprietors; and he is forbidden to marry without the written consent of the firm; but here end the disagreeables of his position. He has no risk. He may be taken up at any time into the Olympus of the real partnership, and, in the meanwhile, he is liberally paid. In the princely house of Gordon & Gordon, for instance, a spade partner gets a thousand a year. With us, the salary was less; but seven hundred was a large income for a man of my age, even in so expensive a city as Shanghai.

Although not naturally an idler, I doubt if I should have worked so hard and so consistently in a climate so unfavourable to exertion, and among companions whose general rule it was to take life as easily and as luxuriously as they could, had I not had a stimulus to nerve me for my labours which with most of them was lacking. Be sure that Hogarth's Good Apprentice was, from the first of his zealous servitude, sincerely in love with his master's daughter. It was my love for my cousin, Constance Barnett, that kept me so steady to my self-allotted task of perfecting myself in every detail of our complicated business, of gaining a real insight into China and its ways, of learning to judge of the resources, the needs, and the actual condition of the wonderful mysterious country, on the outermost border of which we merchants lived and dealt, and of which most of our community were content to take their opinions at second or third hand, and to view a third of the human race through the spectacles furnished by the interpreter or the pig-tailed and pompous comrad.

A four months' furlough, allowed me some three years since by the firm, at a time when the death of a near relative and the division of some property had rendered my presence in England a necessity, had, short as it was, allowed me to find that the charming cousin I had left in the school-room had developed into an extremely fascinating and accomplished young lady. And when my brief stay in my native land was over, and the P. and O. Company wafted me back again, *via* Suez, to my Chinese exile, I had at anyrate the satisfactory remembrance of the timid pressure of a soft small hand, and the tearful glance of a pair of the loveliest blue eyes, as Constance and I exchanged a cousinly farewell. I wrote to her now and again, with a clear conscience, for we were nearly related—and surely one may write to one's cousin; and I shall never forget the absurd ecstasies into which I was thrown when the first answers, in a delicate feminine hand, and on pretty tinted note-paper, that seemed all too dainty for the rough scramble of a post-office, reached me. The image of dear Constance, ever present in my memory, stood me in good stead in more ways than one. It not only urged me to persevering exertion, that I might win a place in the world's esteem worthy of her whom I loved, but it also proved a talisman against the slothful self-indulgence and the evil habits into which a resident in China falls only too easily. And presently, the season being an exceptionally healthy one, and the political atmosphere tolerably

serene, Constance came out to join her father, who was, I may remark, a widower, with but one surviving child. It gradually dawned upon the mind of old Mr Barnett, who was not very imaginative in matters unconnected with manifests and bills of lading, that an attachment existed between his daughter—who would, of course, ultimately be rich—and his nephew, who had but a hundred a year over and above the handsome salary which he drew as a spade partner, newly appointed to the firm of Barnett, Pashley, & Co. My uncle behaved generously in the matter, though rich men often like their heiresses, as the phrase goes, to 'marry money'; and I daresay that the premature bestowal of her heart by Constance occasioned the shipwreck of some pet project of the merchant's own.

Young people have, however, now-a-days, a degree of independence as to their matrimonial arrangements, that to the grave elders and prudent matrons of an earlier generation would have seemed downright revolutionary. And my uncle was very fond of, and very tender with, this his youngest and only daughter, all whose brothers had died while she was still very young, and he could not find it in his heart to thwart her, when once he was assured that her innocent love was given to an honest man, although a poor one. So, although he would not hear of any immediate project of marriage, he sanctioned our engagement with a fairly good grace; and it was understood that Constance should, as soon as I had risen a step in the house, exchange the name of Barnett for that of Springfield. In the meantime, I continued, as I have said, to be an inmate of my uncle's house, a privilege which I shared with only one of the clerks, who owed his exceptionally indulgent position partly to the very strong recommendations, penned by old friends of the principal, which he had brought with him to China, and partly, I admit, to his own brilliant parts and to a singular gift of pleasing which he possessed. This young man, who may have been a year older than myself, was an American by birth, and his name was Lake—Julian Lake. He was a handsome fellow, dark, slender, and tall, with sparkling eyes and very white teeth, that glistened beneath a coal-black moustache, faultlessly trimmed, and curled at the point. He could do most things, and did most of them capitally, playing creditably on all sorts of instruments, singing even better than he played, and handling an oar or a pistol, a foil or a billiard cue, with equal dexterity and success. He could drive, dress, and talk better than nineteen out of any twenty of the young men who mixed in our local society; but far from contenting himself with exciting the admiration, and perhaps the envy, of his contemporaries, he had been painstaking enough, in a business point of view, to win golden opinions from his employers. Lake had a considerable aptitude for picking up, not merely the literary or official languages of China, but also the rude dialects spoken by the country-people who brought their fish or wild-fowl, their bamboo-mats and bone toys, carved with patient care, to the Shanghai market. And as he united to this lingual facility a taste for adventure and a theatrical art of disguising himself, he had undertaken more than one hazardous expedition into the little-known interior, seeking new marts for European imports and districts as yet untapped by trade, at the imminent risk of being speared or stoned, should

the jealous authorities of the regions he traversed see reason to suspect that the humble pedler or itinerant mender of crockery was really a 'foreign devil' from the outer world.

I hope that I shall not be credited with any unworthy feeling when I say frankly that I did not like Lake very much. It was not my fault, as I now know; but at the time I often took myself sharply to task for not being more drawn towards one in whom there was so much to please. But facts are stubborn things, and the fact remains that I tried to like my American comrade, and failed, apparently for no better reason than that which the popular distich assigns for an antipathy to Dr Fell. But the truth was that, while pleased, as others were, by the gay and winning manner of Julian Lake, and while admitting his superiority in social accomplishments ungrudgingly enough, I could not quite bring myself to trust him. Something there was in the showy exterior of my clever young colleague that cried, at least to me, beware! Not that Lake did, or was rumoured to have done, anything which the most censorious of moralists could set down as a dishonourable action. On the contrary, he was almost affected in his punctiliousness with respect to money matters, never anticipated his salary, as some of the more easy-going clerks were apt to do, and declined to take a hand at either whist or *écarté*, or indeed at any game where stakes were lost or won, because, as he laughingly said, he played cards too well; the kings and aces would do whatever he chose. And certainly his skill in sleight of hand was something extraordinary.

I rather suspect, too, that I was a little uneasy at observing that Julian admired Constance Barnet, and that he was very attentive to her; not obtrusively so—it was not in his nature to be obtrusive—but in a quiet deferential fashion, that would have flattered and fascinated many a less true-hearted girl than my cousin. The clever young American was a great favourite in Anglo-Chinese society, and was especially fortunate in winning the suffrages of such few unmarried ladies as might be found in Shanghai drawing-rooms; but Constance never joined in the general chorus of his praise. I think, somehow, that she was almost afraid of him. Perhaps that singular instinctive power of piercing below the surface of character, which women so often possess, and which not seldom reveals a truth which the deductions from worldly experience have failed to elicit, had warned her that a hard and unscrupulous nature lay hidden behind all that gloss and glitter, which, in Julian Lake, served to blind the judgment of the world at large.

One justification I had, at anyrate, for what often appeared to myself as a wrongful prejudice against Lake. My American colleague, soft-spoken and refined as he was, and considerate of the feelings of his equals as he approved himself in general intercourse, was not very tender-hearted towards the brute creation. I have heard of his being known to drown a wretched dog, out of pure wantonness, and to derive amusement from watching the struggles and imploring looks of the poor animal, as it strove in vain to scramble back into the boat, and was pushed back again and again into the waves. He would undoubtedly kill flies—and we have many in China, some of which are bigger and noisier than the familiar British blue-

bottle—with a gusto that reminded me, disagreeably, of Domitian. He drove, as his countrymen often do, skilfully, and rode well—which is, in America, a much rarer accomplishment—but there was something cruel in his way of doing both; he was always teasing and fretting his saddle-horse with the help of a sharp bit and sharp spurs, and, when driving, his stinging whip-lash would come heavily down on the neck or flank of the unlucky brute in the shafts, in punishment of the slightest swerve or stumble. He was stern and imperious in his bearing towards servants too; and the coolies in our warehouse stood in more dread of him than even of 'first-chop master,' as they called the principal, Mr Barnet.

Julian, like many of his fellow-citizens, had a hearty contempt and dislike for all inferior races. A dark skin was with him a badge of scorn, that placed the luckless owner of it below the level of human sympathy; and he openly ridiculed the idea that the dusky heathens around him had any claim to an equal measure of justice. Unluckily, this prejudice of colour assorted only too well with the sentiments expressed by the younger and more unthinking of our associates, in whose eyes a 'nigger' was but a grade above the gorilla in the social scale, and who regarded an Asiatic of whatsoever rank, country, or hue, as superciliously as the dandies of ancient Athens were used to contemplate the slave population that did their lordly bidding. One difference there was, however, between Lake and the bulk of our young men, which the natives of the country could hardly fail to appreciate. The bark of most of these young fellows was decidedly, as the saying is, worse than their bite. They swore at John Chinaman when he angered them; and, perhaps, may have sometimes, in their boyish arrogance, hurt the feelings of harmless, industrious people, whose only fault was that they wore pigtails, instead of the mutton-chop whisker of conventional British respectability. But, at anyrate, if our counting-house subalterns, our third officers of clipper-ships, and our 'young gentlemen' from the corvette on duty at the station, scoffed at the Chinese, they did not ill-treat them, and the free-handed English fashion in which they tossed about their loose cash fully made up in popular estimation for a little roughness of speech. Julian Lake, however, was really hard with the yellow-skinned inferiors over whom he wielded a little brief authority; and, but for an instance of this harshness which I am about to relate, it is likely that this story would never have been committed to paper.

In one of my expeditions up the Hoang-he, whither I had been sent to see to the clearing of sundry tea-laden junks, capriciously confiscated by the mandarin general in command of the imperial army, then waging a dubious war against the dreaded Tae-pings, I had come upon a village in a state of extreme desolation. A thriving place it must once have been, with its sacred grove, and the gilt roof of its joss-house capping the summit of a small round eminence, whence miles of the flat low-lying country, intersected with canals, studded with farms and villas, and tilled and fenced with the patient care that these laborious denizens of the Flowery Land bring to every item of their daily toil, could be traced like the mosaic of a pavement spread below. The neat cottages were charred and blackened now, the trim



baraboo fences burned or broken, the mills ruined, the fields ravaged, the whole neighbourhood a wilderness. A few dead bodies I saw lying among the trampled rose-bushes and sunflowers of the neglected gardens, and a stork remained, undisturbed, on the nest she had built on the roof of an uninjured house; but there were no living inhabitants left, and no cattle. The place had been twice sacked—once by the Imperialists, and once by the Tae-pings; and the latter had left nothing with the breath of life to mourn over the widespread destruction.

As I passed by a bed of tall reeds, I heard a moaning sound, however; and there, in a muddy ditch, within musket-shot of the village, lay a bundle of blue clothes, which, on inspection, turned out to be a Chinese boy, of perhaps twelve or thirteen. A pitiable object he looked, lying on the rank weeds at the brink of the slimy water, and stretching out a lean little hand, and an arm, the sleeve of which was clotted with blood, as he whimpered out some half-intelligible supplication. One of the guides, at my desire, went down into the ditch, elicited the boy's story by a few questions in the local dialect, and communicated it to me through the interpreter. A very commonplace, everyday sort of history they both seemed to consider it, and hardly worth the attention of any European gentleman. The boy had escaped from the village on the evening of the massacre, the sole survivor, so far as he knew, of his family and his townfolk. He had been speared through the leg and through the foot, and was lame, but he had slipped past the Tae-pings, and crawled on hands and knees to the reed-bed, and hidden himself there, in the ditch. He had received sword-cuts, too, not deep, but enough to be very painful, now that they had stiffened. He had lain there for many hours, and was weak with loss of blood and lack of nourishment, and would soon, no doubt, be dead. That was all.

That was all—literally all! in the men's estimation; and when the interpreter quietly added: 'Ride on, now, master, one piecey bit faster,' there was no irony in his tone. That I, or any rational being, should concern myself seriously about the fate of this poor wounded outcast, left to lie and fester in a ditch, like a hurt water-rat, seemed to their eminently practical minds impossible. That I should leave the boy to his fate was exactly what they expected; and their surprise, when I insisted on picking up this luckless waif, and carrying him along with us as gently as might be, in quest of food and a surgeon, was evidently genuine. They were used, however, to the whims of their foreign paymasters, and they obeyed me, grinning; while Ching, as the lad announced his name to be, bore the change of fortune like a philosopher, and was apparently quite satisfied that something kind was intended. The cure was easy; and, patched up by the doctor, and plentifully supplied with fish and bean-oil, and the other greasy viands on which the Chinese delight to feed, Ching grew sleek and strong; and being an orphan, with no discoverable kindred to whom to restore him, he was, at my wish, allowed to hang about Mr Barnet's mansion and the hongs, as a sort of errand-boy and doer of odd jobs.

Ching—a name as common in China as that of Dick or Joe in an English village—never quite lost the lameness resulting from the spear-thrust, but

he soon learned to hobble about with surprising swiftness; while his activity in climbing over the mountainous packages piled in our warehouses, or in swinging himself, by the help of rope, beam, or crane-tackle, into the lofts on the quay, was absolutely monkeylike. He was not very fond of work, for all that, having a love of laziness for its own sake that rivalled the basking indolence of the Neapolitan lazzaroni; but when stimulated by any immediate hope of profit, he was almost feverishly industrious. For the bribe of a few copper cash he would do anything—from diving after small objects to the bottom of the Vermilion Canal, to seeking out the destined recipient of a letter through every counting-house and drinking-bar in Shanghai; but an instant after the work was done and the fee secured, he would coil himself in a corner, and sleep with the animal enjoyment of a dog on the hearth-rug. When found, he was a tall, slender youngster, with very little flesh, long narrow eyes, a face that in colour and shape resembled an unwholesome lemon, a mangy pigtail, and no backbone worth the mentioning. After a few months of good usage and plentiful feeding, he became plump and healthy, with a glossy skin and a pigtail of silken softness; but his eyes were as inscrutable, and his spine as gristly, as ever.

Ching, it may be conjectured, was very fond of myself, as having saved his life, and removed him from a state of squalid famine to one of comfort. Such, however, was not precisely the case. We were excellent friends, and I believe I stood in his affections only one degree below the big Newfoundland dog, *Neptune*, who was Ching's faithful ally on aquatic expeditions; but a romantic feeling of gratitude is not very quick in taking root in a Chinese bosom. The lad liked me, though, I think in rather a patronising spirit, for I have heard him crow with exultant amusement at my clumsy efforts to imitate the tricks he had learned from some wandering Cantonese juggler, tossing up any number of pith-balls, and balancing the most incongruous articles on his low forehead and his pointed chin, while he kept a twirling plate in rapid motion between his prehensile feet.

Julian Lake had seen the boy's introduction into the house with no particular pleasure, and had sneered, in his superfine manner, at my troubling myself to 'make a nine days' wonder of a dirty mongrel like that.' But Mr Barnet had not been pleased at the want of humanity implied by the remark, and the young American was quick to note the changes of his patron's mood. He turned the conversation, therefore, in his usual light, jesting manner; but he bore Ching no good-will from the first, and never treated him otherwise than with contumely, taking a tyrannical pleasure in employing him in work that was not connected with his regular duties about the house, and seldom or never repaying these extorted services otherwise than with a kick or a curse. One day—how well I remember it!—Lake's wrath was roused, and not unjustly so, against the truant Mercury, for Ching had been intrusted with some letter of acceptance to an invitation to join a yachting-party, and had yielded to the seductions of some Chinese substitute for chuckfarthing, loitered away the sunny hours with a choice knot of street urchins, and kept the letter undelivered within the folds of his red waistband until it was too late. He was lucky at pitch-and-toss, it appears, and came back radiant,

jingling his petty winnings in his long-nailed hand, when he encountered Lake, hot, chafing, and disappointed, having gone down to the wharf to hear that the yacht, with the ladies, champagne, Wenhams ice, and provision-baskets, all duly put on board, had sailed without him. It was enough, I admit, to vex a saint.

Lake was not a saint. Very fortunately, as I strolled into the verandah to light my cheroot, my notice was attracted by a strange smothered noise of blows, moans, struggling, and the sounds of some one trying, in a half-suffocated voice, to cry aloud. I hurried to the spot whence the noise proceeded, a terrace of bricks, facing the canal, and within the garden-fence of Mr Barnet's yamun, and there I found that it was Ching, who, more than half-choked, was trying to cry out, while Lake, his face quite livid with rage, held him by the throat with one hand, while with his heavy rattan he dealt upon the boy's writhing body and limbs such a shower of merciless blows as it sickened me to see. Poor Ching! He was in fault, certainly, but seldom has a trifling transgression been so ruthlessly punished. I saw that the lad's face was bruised, and his clothes cut through by the cane, and I shouted to Lake to hold his hand, but he did not hear me; and when I reached the place where he was still belabouring Ching, and laid my hand upon his arm, he turned on me with a snarl and a display of white teeth that would have done credit to a savage dog. 'Leave off!' he exclaimed; 'mind your own business, Mr Springfield! What right to dictate'—

'I will soon shew you,' I said, growing excited in my turn: 'give me up that stick, you madman!' There was a momentary struggle, and then the rattan was in my hand, not his.

'Take your grasp off the lad's throat! Confound you, you are killing him!' said I, as soon as the cane was in safer custody; and indeed poor Ching was purple and choking.

'Curse the brat!' growled Lake, as the boy dropped exhausted at his feet. 'What matters that yellow vermin to you? I'll fling him, neck and heels, into the canal.'

'Do, and I will throw you after him,' was my answer; and Lake, who knew that I was considerably the stronger of the two, merely gave me a dark look—I had reason to remember it afterwards—and let Ching crawl, unmolested, out of his reach. He sobbed and panted piteously for want of breath, and there was a smear of blood on his cheek, but no bones were broken; and, after a moment's consideration, I thought that the best course would be, if possible, to bring Lake into a more wholesome frame of mind. I had no wish, if I could help it, to make him an irreconcilable enemy of the boy, by any further mortification to his pride. As for a complaint to Mr Barnet, I had not only an English public schoolboy's rooted aversion to tale-bearing, but I well knew that my good uncle was not prepared to regard a Chinese lad as entitled to the same forbearance as if he had been born in Berkshire or in Suffolk. The merchant looked upon such pliant aliens as Ching very much as many well-meaning old-fashioned persons at home are apt to think of the lower animals. Feed them, by all means, he would have said, and do what you can, according to their lights, to make them happy; but if they wax saucy and kick, to flog them into obedience is the only policy;

if the chastisement turned out to be excessive, so much the worse, not for the injudicious flogger, but for the unlucky floggee. My uncle would not dismiss his American clerk for anything short of positive manslaughter, where a native was in question, and a reprimand would simply embitter Lake's feeling of hostility towards the boy, and do more harm than good.

Accordingly, after drawing from Julian a sullen but accurate account of Ching's transgression, and frankly acknowledging that he had cause for anger, although the practical manifestation of his indignation had taken too extreme a form, I improved the occasion by pointing out what, from my point of view, was amiss in his handling of the case, and how it behoved a Christian gentleman to deal with the heathen inferiors, who had a right to expect more generosity and self-control from him than from those of lower pretensions to civilisation and enlightenment. I don't pretend that I was very eloquent, but, at anyrate, I know that I was at once earnest and wishful to conciliate; and, to all appearance, my harangue produced a more satisfactory effect than the discourse of a more finished orator often is so fortunate as to effect.

Lake, who had heard me with his brow knit and his eyes riveted on the ground, presently looked up with a bright, pleasant smile, and, without shewing any trace of his late passionate wrath: 'Hang it! Springfield,' he said, in his old genial way, 'you were right, and I was wrong. I beg your pardon if I was rude to you; and I would beg Ching's, on my soul, I would, if only he could understand that I meant it. Yes, you are quite right; I forgot myself, and I'm sorry for it now, and will make all the amends in my power. I know what a blackguard I must seem to you, half-murdering a poor ignorant young wretch, for what, after all, I should have had to grin and bear, if one of our Irish hired helps in New York had done it, as I have known them do worse things in the blundering line. Upon my word, I am glad you came, to save the poor boy, and to save me from myself, for I had fairly lost my head, and hardly knew what I was about. Poor Ching! I'll try if a little silver ointment won't cure those bruises of his, and he shall have a smart new jacket, and the finest cap money can buy in the bazaar. But—but won't you shake hands with me, Springfield, and—and try not to think worse of me than I can help! You were not born on a plantation, down South, and used to hear the smack of the whip in your early childhood, as I was, worse luck!'

Lake was as good as his word. He gave Ching a flowered-silk robe, a pair of black satin boots with soles about two inches thick, and the upper satins of which were gorgeous with gold butterflies, to say nothing of five Spanish dollars, and a Pekin cap adorned with such gaudy embroidery, that the lad's playfellows did not venture to approach the wearer with their accustomed familiarity of street-comradeship, but merely hooted him from a respectful distance when he went abroad. Also he gave me his word never to repeat the experiment of manual correction, let Ching's shortcomings be ever so glaring; and he drew from me, without exactly asking for it, some sort of promise to keep silence on the subject to both Mr Barnet and my cousin Constance. Lake admitted that he would not like Miss Barnet to regard him as, to use his own words, 'a barbarous planter'; and he spoke with

much good feeling of the disadvantages to which his own youth had been exposed, reared as he had been among slaves, and having imbibed from infancy the strongest prejudices of caste and colour. 'When I am quite cool,' he said, 'I can bring myself to admit that a Lascar, or a Chinese, or indeed anybody, red, black, or brown, is, in a sense, my equal, and that the difference is but skin-deep. But when I am riled, the old Adam is too strong for me; and early habits of thought make me act and speak in a way that I often regret afterwards, I can assure you.'

Altogether, Lake spoke very nicely indeed; and I began to reconsider my opinion of his character, and to think that I had been hasty in the unfavourable judgment which I had formed of him. He never did ill-use Ching any more, nor did he shew the slightest resentment towards myself for my very summary check to his high-handed proceedings. The Chinese boy, on his part, never failed, after that day, to exhibit a marked deference for Julian, and a readiness to do his bidding, which he evinced towards no other inmate of the house; and there was something degrading in the sight of the way in which the boy would cringe and cower when Lake gave him any trifling order, hiding his deferential hands with his loose sleeves, and drooping his meek eyes to the ground. I had often heard that an oriental cherishes a sort of grateful affection, akin to that which a beaten spaniel is presumed to feel for some aggressor from whom he has sustained unmerited injury; and unquestionably Ching's demeanour towards his late persecutor went far towards confirming this seemingly perverse theory. Still, at times I have seen an odd light begin to glow in Ching's feline eyes as he watched Lake turn away, and which, combined with a queer tightening of the lips, and a clawing motion of the long-nailed fingers, suggested to me at intervals that Ching's memory was more tenacious of a wrong done to him than a casual observer might have supposed.

About this time there occurred a circumstance, insignificant in itself, but on which subsequent events were to throw a lurid and terrible light. I was returning one evening at dusk from an out-of-the-way suburb of the Chinese city, far from the palaces and warehouses of the wealthy merchants, native and foreign, of Shanghai, and where an English face was a rarity. A few years earlier, it would have been madness for a European to have risked himself, unattended, among that maze of alleys and narrow, fetid canals, on the banks of which the crumbling huts of the poor, built chiefly of cane daubed with sun-dried mud, were crowded together in all the picturesque squalor of an eastern town. It was safe enough at the time of which I write; foreigners were held in high esteem as good customers and invincible fighters, and I could traverse this peopled wilderness with perhaps greater security than that which I should have experienced, after night-fall, in the streets of London. The motive which had attracted me to this unsavoury quarter was trivial enough. Constance was fond of birds, and had a pretty aviary, behind the wires of which all manner of feathered songsters of outlandish aspect piped in shrill chorus; but, in spite of all care, there had been a great mortality among my cousin's gaudy plumaged pets, and I had undertaken to procure a fresh supply of newly-caught warblers. The suburb of which I

speak is the great resort of roving bird-catchers, who annually arrive with many cages full of little tuneful captives from the wooded and mountainous provinces to the southward, and which they sell to the rich Chinese residents, some of whose yamuns are crammed with every variety of bird and beast that money can buy. I had met with no success, however, for the migratory dealers in these feathered treasures had not, as usual, arrived, and all my inquiries were fruitless.

I had noticed, too, more than one sign of the times that filled me with vague but gloomy apprehensions of coming evil. The people were unquiet, and there was evidently a restless spirit abroad among them, a spirit that denoted expectation, so far as I could judge, rather than any deliberate purpose. But the old apathy was gone, and with it the childlike aptitude for being amused, as children are, without a thought beyond the simple pleasure of the moment. That populous suburb was commonly enlivened towards nightfall by the beating of gongs and small drums, the squeaking of the reed-flute, and the hoarse voices of the many street-dancers, jugglers, and itinerant charlatans, whose open-air exhibitions are to the lower class of Chinese what the galleries of the theatres are to the drama-loving poor of Paris. There were on this particular evening few of these familiar sights to be seen; and the one puppet-show, and the two companies of dancing animals, with a tame bear for principal performer, and a few mangy monkeys and sad-eyed dogs in crimson paper-frills and peacock-feathers, which had adventured forth to appeal to public patronage, were pining in the cold shade of neglect. The men gathered together in whispering groups; and the women, as they tottered on their preposterous feet to fill their gleaming brass pitchers and blue pipkins with water, were less clamorous and less merry than of old. Even the little folks at play among the rubbish-heaps, or making dirt-pies beside the shallow canals, were changed for the worse. They had grown turbulent, flourishing scraps of lath as though they were swords, executing mimic marches at the heels of tattered generals nine years of age, and parading to the rough music of a conch-shell trumpet, and a drum made of an old calabash, while a rag on the point of a switch waved as a banner over the heads of the Lilliputian army.

No direct insult, and no positive menace, did I meet with in my walk; but some of the men scowled at me; the females, on the other hand, having rather a pitying and sorrowful expression of countenance as the European stranger passed them by; and a few of the hardier urchins shouted:

'Foreign devil, foreign devil!

There you go—there! there you go!

Fanqui, in black hat!'

A few weeks earlier, I thought, as I passed on, none of these youngsters would have dared to utter a disrespectful word in the hearing of any European. The mob of Shanghai, within a short space after the signing of the treaty guaranteeing our freedom of trading and residing in China, had been thoroughly taught that outbursts of the old jealousy of the foreigner were highly reprehensible. The mandarin police, with their long sticks, had completely cowed any surly sentiment of national moroseness on the part of the rabble;



and besides, the Chinese are as tractable as any people on this earth, and can be managed with ease, though always on the unimplied condition, that they do not feel themselves the strongest. On that evening, I felt sure that mischief of some kind must be brewing.

At the corner of a narrow lane, where a tall fence crested with iron spikes defended a strip of well irrigated garden-ground on one side, while on the other stood a row of tumble-down hovels, built of rotten bamboo and mats, and thatched with flag-rushes cut in the river-bed, stood three men conversing. They were just parting company when I came within earshot, and one of them, half-mechanically, as it seemed, stretched out his hand as he said some words of farewell. Now, handshaking is not a Chinese mode of salutation, and something singular in this valedictory act, and in the hesitating manner in which the proffered hand was accepted, caught my attention at once. The man who had held out his hand to be shaken was a tall fellow, young, to judge by his lithe figure and upright bearing, but so curiously huddled up in loose white clothes and a wide-brimmed hat of the coarsest straw, that nobody could easily have guessed his nationality. He wore no robe, but a loose long jacket and baggy trousers of some stout homespun fabric, with a yellow silk sash and Chinese slippers. By the nature of his attire, he should have been a seafaring man of some sort, but whether a tawny Lascar from Madras, a Portuguese from Macao, or some stray deck-hand out of a Canton junk or a Malay proa, it was impossible to conjecture. Shanghai contained many coasting sailors of every variety of complexion, from sooty black to a fair Swedish skin-tint, and of every religion from that of Mumbo Jumbo to Mormonism.

The seafaring man seemed vexed with himself, judging from his gestures, at having given his hand to one of his two companions. Perhaps he thought that it was an act, in such a place, of a compromising character, or one calculated to attract attention; but at anyrate he did not offer to renew the handshaking with the second of the two men, undoubtedly Chinese, with whom he had been so earnestly conversing. They exchanged only a word or two more, and nothing reached my ear but this one speech: 'Let the dollars be ready, then. Unbar the gate, and leave it to us to do the rest!'

It was not the sailor-looking man who had said this. The speaker was the taller of the two landmen, and I noticed that he spoke very slowly and with a careful emphasis, just as we all of us speak when we wish to be understood by a foreigner who needs to have the sense of our discourse made very plain to him. He employed, too, the pure literary language, without the corruptions to which daily experience in business had accustomed me, and his accent was correct and clear, though the voice itself was a nasal and unpleasing one.

Just then a red paper-lantern, borne before some notable suburban trader who was rich enough to be escorted home by a couple of obsequious servants, threw its ruddy light upon the group, and especially on the sailor's face. Good heavens! it is Julian Lake, here, of all unlikely places, in such company, and in such a garb! In another instant, and as if shrinking from the light of the crimson lantern, Lake was gone; but the other two men, laughing low, and muttering to one another as they came slowly on, passed me so closely that the

sleeve of the taller of the two brushed me as he went by, and I had a fair view of them both. Queer-looking persons they were, decorously dressed in blue cotton and black satin, but dusty and travel-stained, while I noticed that they had long hair, the very wearing of which is in China a heinous political offence, and that both of them had a very strange indescribable expression of face, which no words of mine can quite convey, something half-sly, half-silly, wholly brutalised, such as one might expect to see stamped on the countenance of a vicious and feeble-minded fanatic. Once, and once only, had I seen such an expression on human faces before, and that was when some Tae-ping insurgents, brought into Shanghai, passed me on their way to execution. As I walked home that night, I pondered much on that singular rencontre with Julian Lake and his wild friends. What could it all mean?

#### WOMEN-WORKERS ABROAD.

LISTENING to the outpourings of some clamourers for sexual equality, one might suppose tyrannical man had effectually barred woman from the field of labour. It may be a question whether the sex would be much the worse for it if he had done so; but the fact is that women's hands are busy enough in every country having any industrial pretensions; the tendency being rather towards an increase than decrease of the feminine element. In the Reports of our diplomatic and consular agents upon the condition of the labouring classes abroad, the subject is only noticed incidentally, yet it is possible to gather from these sufficient information to enable us to form a tolerable idea of the position occupied by women-workers in the principal European states.

What effect the awful havoc the war has made among the males of France and Germany will have upon the labour-markets of these countries, it is impossible to anticipate; the figures with which we deal refer to the state of affairs before the conflict began; although, for convenience' sake, we must speak of them as belonging to time present. Among the producing population of France, there are a hundred female employers to three hundred and seventy-one male employers, a hundred female to two hundred and twenty-one male employés—(clerks, shop-assistants, &c.), and a hundred workwomen to a hundred and ninety-one workmen. Of course, the relative numerical strength of the sexes among the actual workers differs greatly in different branches of industry; in the French official returns, these are classified under the following heads—the figures we have appended representing the number of men employed in each branch, to every hundred women—Textile fabrics, 96; mines and quarries, 976; preparation of metals, 1069; manufactures of work in metal, 1735; leather, 1595; wood, 1298; ceramic manufactures, 458; chemical products, 430; building, 30,892; lighting, 1068; furniture, 412; dress, 51; food, 592; transport, 5106; science, letters, and art, 239; luxuries and amusements, 183; military, 1901; various, 165.

In Paris alone, above 178,000 females earn their livelihood in some department of trade, 161,795 being *bond fide* workwomen; and of these, half are engaged in trades having to do with dress, the grand total of 130,625 being divided among 22 occupations in the accompanying proportions.

Seamstresses number 51,169; bleachers, 20,896; shirt and linen makers, 20,579; artificial flower and feather makers, 7432; milliners, 6453; boot and shoe makers, 6284; tailoresses, 4619; hat and cap makers, 3138; glove, breeches, and truss makers, 2479; embroiderers (of women's attire), 2353; button-makers, 801; cane and umbrella makers, 529; comb, brush, and dressing-case makers, 525; dyers, 484; embroiderers in silver and gold, 463; perfumers, 392; straw-hat makers, 261; furriers, 250; stocking-makers, 138; barbers, hairdressers, and wig-makers, 126; gaiter-makers, 110; calenderers, 67; wooden-shoe makers, 16. Under the somewhat pretentious division of 'Science, Letters, and Art,' we find enumerated 2554 bookbinders; 779 employed in printing, engraving, and lithography; 360 in paper-making; 93 in the manufacture of musical instruments; 91 in making various necessities for the writing-table; 25 in typefoundry; 73 engaged at theatres and concerts; 78 on newspapers and reviews; and 67 editors of books and music (actresses, singers, and newspaper editresses are classified with the followers of liberal professions). Among 7788 ministers to luxury and amusement, are 256 makers of toys and playing-cards; 261 producers of works of art; 5666 workers in gilding, jewelry, and allied callings; and 1443 women employed in tobacco-manufactories. Of 1589 workwomen connected with the commissariat, 258 are engaged at restaurants, taverns, and such places of entertainment; and precisely the same number are set down as bakers. The preparation of ice, chocolate, and creams occupies 210; and 78 are employed by pastry-cooks. One only figure among the millers, 2 among sugar-refiners, and 5 among the brewers. Then there are 133 finding work as preserve-makers; 11 as potted-meat makers; and 17 in the concoction of preserved vegetables. The dairy-women number 13; the 'roasters,' 6; water-carriers, 8; and the butchers—yes, the butchers—140; while 18 strong-minded dames earn their bread in the slaughter-houses! After that, we are not surprised to learn Paris boasts 9 female boat-builders, and 245 'wheelwrights, carriage-makers, farriers, and saddlers.' Military equipments afford employment to 291 females; 40 help to produce firearms and ammunition, and 3 to make swords and bayonets. 8793 workwomen are employed in the manufacture of textile fabrics, and 2859 in the production of articles of furniture—782 of these being catalogued as cabinet-makers, 1123 as upholsterers, 758 as bedding-makers, and 39 as looking-glass makers. Connected with building, we are astonished to see 3 architects, 8 sawyers, 46 carpenters and joiners, 8 masons and slaters, 99 marble and stone cutters, 7 chimney-makers and sweeps, and 1 plumber; then come 75 paper-hangers, 89 painters, glaziers, plasterers, and decorators, and 10 ornamental decorators. Ceramic manufactories afford employment to 146 women, chemical works to 376, candle-factories to 53; 12 are engaged in the making of gas; 445 in various methods of manipulating leather; 299 in metal and hardware work; 225 in turning, box-making, and other trades coming under the heading of 'wood'; and 37 are employed in the manufacture of cast iron, steel, copper, and other metals. With the exception of the milliners, who are boarded by their employers, and receive an annual salary, embroiderers appear to be the best paid, since they can depend upon earning from

fourteen to seventeen shillings a week all the year round; while two shillings a day represents the incoming of the ordinary good workwomen in most other trades. Having already given some details of the wages of Parisian women-workers,\* it is unnecessary to repeat them here; but, considering the numbers they muster, it is sad to think there is too much truth in Mr Malet's remark, that it is hardly possible for the great majority of them 'to live by their wages alone'—words bearing a terrible meaning when women are concerned.

Of the female population of Württemberg, 73,400 are employed in husbandry, 6000 in domestic servitude, 14,200 in manufactories, and 20,600 as 'independent workwomen;' making together 114,200, out of a total number of 313,000 single adult females. No doubt, a strong contingent to this army of female workers might be added, if we knew how many of the 68,000 widows and 273,000 married women—although the employment of the latter in factories is exceptional—properly belong to it; while the number is swelled by girls above fourteen, working in weaving, printing, and bleaching establishments; glass and china works; sugar-bakeries; and manufactories of gold and silver wares. The rate of wages differs materially in different provinces, in large and small towns, and in town and country; the average being from 4s. 6d. to 9s. a week for women, and from 3s. to 6s. for girls between fourteen and eighteen; or, as nearly as possible, half the rate paid to men. Stuttgart boasts a Refuge for female factory operatives, in which, at a cost of eightpence per week, a girl has the use of a bed, clothes-chest, table, chair, &c., with light and firing; sacrificing, however, some of the liberty which renders factory-work so attractive, as she is obliged to be indoors at a certain hour. The lowest amount earned by the girls for whose benefit the Refuge is intended being 4s. 8d. a week, they are enabled to devote four shillings to food and clothing; and their condition is considered enviable. If so, what must that of their less lucky sisters be, for, while the number of factory girls in the city who do not live with their families is put down at a thousand, the Refuge only accommodates eighty.

Thirty-nine trades are enumerated as employing female labour in Saxony; in these the rate of payment for six working days of twelve hours' actual labour is as follows. Starting alike at a minimum of 3s., women-gardeners and Turkey-red dyers may make 6s.; button-makers and shoemakers, 7s.; porcelain-workers, paper-hangers, cloth-workers, weavers, wool-spinners, and day-labourers, 7s. 6d.; gold cornice makers, 8s. 3d.; papermakers, 9s.; furriers, 9s. 9d.; barbers and meerscham-makers, 12s.; tailors, 13s. 6d.; and artificial florists, 15s.—the highest amount a woman, unless she be a porcelain artist, can hope to earn. Females employed at chemical works, straw-hat makers, hatters, bookbinders, and gold and silver embroiderers, earn from 3s. 6d. to 4s. 2d., 7s. 6d., 9s. 9d., and 15s., respectively; cigar-makers are paid from 3s. 9d. to 9s.; worsted-spinners from 3s. 9d. to 11s.; cardboard-makers may make 7s.; type-setters and chocolate-makers, 9s.; umbrella-makers, 15s. a week; their lowest remuneration being 4s. Cap-makers, gloves, and

\* See 'Artisan in Europe,' chap. I. No. 341.



walking-stick makers are but poorly paid, the highest wages receivable in each of these trades standing at 8s. 3d., 7s. 6d., and 6s. 9d.; while female workers in the mines get only 6s.; and, yet worse, mill operatives earn from 2s. 8d. to 5s., and toy-makers from 1s. 6d. to 6s. Of all the occupations mentioned, there is only one—the straw-hat manufacture—which is confined to women; in only two—artificial flowers and umbrellas—do they earn as much money as their fellow-workers of the opposite sex; and in but eleven of the remainder do they receive half as high a rate of wages.

In the duchy of Baden, women and girls labour in cotton-mills, button-factories, iron foundries, and silk and umbrella factories. In 403 establishments, employing more than twenty hands in ware and work rooms, there are altogether 34,487 operatives, of whom 13,975 are females; and of these, 931 are not yet emancipated from school attendance. The major part are paid by the day of twelve or eleven hours, according to the season, at the rate of from 5d. to 2s. a day; piece-workers earning from the higher minimum of 6d. to the lower maximum of 1s. 10d. Some 1500 work-women make about 6s. a week, working for the factories at their own homes. In many of the factories, the hands are so well looked after that both their health and morals are said to be in less danger than in their own homes. In the silk-works of Carl Mez at Freiburg, both the indoor and outdoor systems have been tried; and, after thirty-five years' experience, this conscientious employer says: 'If factories are well conducted in respect to morals, they are a source of benefit, not only to the operatives and their families, but also to the whole population. It is a mistake to suppose that the condition of the agricultural labourers is a very satisfactory one; on the contrary, there is much misery among them, especially moral misery. When mothers apply to us for work for strong, healthy girls, we often tell them such girls are more fit for labour in the fields, and for service with the peasants; but, in reply, too frequently receive an account of the hard and immoral life associated with such service. We have ourselves seen that girls have been obliged to submit to very severe peasant-labour in the summer, in order to eke out the most scanty subsistence for the winter. The scene changes when a well-managed factory comes into the village. The poor girls must, then, either receive better treatment and better wages, or they go into the factory. The moral benefit of a well-ordered factory is still greater; it affects the whole village; and any one returning to it after twenty years, will find a great change for the better.'

This may be the case in Baden; but we fear that elsewhere the factory system has not been found conducive to feminine improvement; too generally, 'work-girls' become very fast, very free, and very extravagant, slatternly in dress, and dissipated in habits. In Prussia, a rapid increase of population, accompanied with an equally rapid development of industry, has led to an increased use of female labour in manufacturing establishments, until more than a fifth of the operatives are of the weaker sex; but those who should know, declare the financial benefit thereby conferred upon the families to which the workers belong is counterbalanced by the evil effects upon the workers themselves, who

are described as inordinately fond of pleasure, and indulging in a dissolute way of living that brings them other mouths besides their own to fill. Certainly, if Prussian female operatives, having no resources save their own earnings, indulge in any dissipation, it must perforce be of a very cheap kind, for their wages are of the lowest, as will be seen from a few examples of the amounts earnable by them in a week, working eleven hours a day, in different trades. Cotton-weaving, 10s. to 15s. 6d.; silk, woollen, ribbon, and india-rubber factories, 7s. 6d. to 9s.; soap and candle works, 7s.; cigar-factories, 2s. to 15s.; carpet-factories, 3s. 9d. to 6s.; lace-factories, 3s. to 6s.; dyeing, 7s. 6d. to 9s.; percussion-cap making, 8s. 3d.; plating-works, 6s. 6d.; goldsmith's work, 6s. to 10s. 3d.; gold and silver wire works, 1s. 3d. to 5s. 2d.; and in the coke-works of Upper Silesia, from 4s. 6d. to 6s. According to the census of 1867, in the provinces of Prussia, Posen, Silesia, Pomerania, Brandenburg, Saxony, Slesvig-Holstein, Hanover, Westphalia, Hesse, Nassau, and the Rhenish Provinces, which constituted what is called the Prussian monarchy, twenty-one per cent. of the female population come in the category of 'persons actively employed, being at the rate of thirty-nine females to every hundred males; 2,269,726 are registered as personally occupied in one or other of the eighteen occupations serving as heads under which to classify the population of Prussia. Of these, 1,323,476 are engaged in agriculture, cattle-breeding, vine-cultivation, and gardening; 642,100 in domestic and personal service; 197,756 in manufactures and retail industry; 36,879 in commerce (commercial dealings in goods, money or credit; trade-books, works of arts, music and insurances); 20,178 in callings relating to lodging and refreshment; 16,942 in medicine and the care of the sick; 14,649 in education and instruction; 5804 in mining and metallurgy; 3085 in land-traffic; 2667 in art and literature; 1843 in water-traffic; 1489 are employed in connection with public worship and 'the business of interments'; 1161 in fisheries; 1054 in the management of forests and preservation of game; 333 figure among officials and functionaries of the communal and municipal administration; 144 as persons in attendance upon government civil departments, and 19 as the same in courts of law; 17 are connected with the army, and two with the navy. Some of these classes being subdivided, we find there are 203,848 Prussian landowners, tenant-farmers, owners of vineyards and gardens, and overseers of the feminine gender, to 1,119,628 agricultural assistants, apprentices, and labourers; 26,727 women are registered as merchants, bankers, dealers in works of art, books, and music, or clerks employed in these branches of trade, and directors, officers, and agents of assurance companies; and 10,152 as clerks, apprentices, saleswomen, packers, &c. There are 55,979 female owners of mills and factories, clerks, and master-tradeswomen, to 141,771 factory overseers, forewomen, mechanics, and factory operatives; 5320 women are set down as 'miners and workmen' in mines, quarries, and foundries; 992 as forest labourers; 62 as officials for looking after game; 1911 as coach-proprietors, postal, telegraph, and railway officials; 1174 as drivers, postillions, and railway labourers; 7126 as hotel servants and waiters; and, to end the long list, 903 appear as 'ships' crews, sailors, boatmen, and ferry-men.'

Mr Lytton says female labour competes more successfully with male labour in Austria than in most other lands, and expresses a doubt whether there is any country in Europe where a greater proportion of heavy physical labour is performed by women, despite the laws enjoining that in employing the sex, their inferior bodily strength and more delicate organisation are to be carefully considered. The exact sort of heavy work he, however, omits to name, but we fancy he must have had the mining districts in his thoughts, in which 13,000 women and children are found amongst a total of 104,356 hands. In Vienna, about a thousand women earn from five to ten shillings a week as turners, pipe-cutters, mouth-piece makers, button-makers, and basket-makers; thirty gain a livelihood as bronze-workers; and some five hundred women, and half as many girls, are employed in tailoring; but it is a curious commentary on Mr Lytton's remark about the success of female competition, that no fewer than a thousand Viennese workmen earn from twelve to twenty shillings a week at dressmaking—just twice as much as women engaged in the same occupation.

Travelling northwards, we find Sweden with an industrial population of 1,036,977, of which the feminine element counts 248,222—agriculture claiming 154,413; mines and manufactures, 10,529; trade, 5741; service, 75,546; medicine, 1510; education, 1036; law, 28; transport, 13; and religion, 6. Many females obtain a livelihood in the mines of Danemora, by fining and roasting the ore; but they are not permitted to work underground. One of the largest manufacturing establishments in the country is the patent safety lucifer-match factory of Jönköping, employing about 650 hands, the greater number being women and children, who are paid according to the quantity of work they turn out; their daily earnings ranging between fourteenpence and three shillings and fourpence, the few paid by the day never getting more than one-and-fivepence, and sometimes as little as ninepence, for thirteen hours' work. In the cotton-spinning and weaving works of Nordköping, twelve hours constitute a day, winter or summer; the girls in the dyeing and bleaching departments receiving at the most sevenpence a day; while spinners may make thirteenspence, and warpers, a penny more; but that is the highest wage they can hope for. The Swedish law permits women to follow any handicraft, any manufacturing, trading, or industrial calling, providing they are of good character, and free from control either of person or property. A married woman (if her husband is not as a collector of taxes, a public accuser, or officer of customs, forbidden himself to carry on any trade) has the same privilege as her single sisters; but before embarking in business, she must obtain her husband's consent, and he must declare himself responsible for any obligations she may incur by her venture.

Within the last ten years, wages have risen considerably in Russia, and, for a wonder, the women have had their full share of the improvement. At Moscow, the industrial centre of the empire, they find employment in flax, cotton, and paper mills, bleaching-works and woollen manufactories. They are usually paid monthly, earning in the paper-trade, 16s.; in the woollen factories, from 12s. 7d. to 26s. 8d. As tenters, twistars, card-feeders, reellers, dressers and dyers in the bleaching, dyeing, and

print works, the monthly wages of the women run from 13s. 4d. to 24s.; cotton-weavers get more than that—namely, 32s. 8d.; and warpers, 31s.; while reellers are paid 19s.; tenters, 15s.; and pickers, 14s. 8d. The highest wages paid to females in the flax-mills are received by the warpers, who make 36s. 8d.; other hands earning from 10s. 8d. to 25s. 4d. Nine shillings and sixpence being reckoned the average cost of a month's food for a Russian artisan, the workwomen earn sufficient to maintain themselves; which is more than can be said for the same class in lands supposed to be more highly favoured than that over which the Czar rules.

An English crown-piece represents the usual weekly earnings of a Spanish workwoman, whether employed in making hats, cigars, or shoes. Seamstresses working at home average the same amount, receiving 2s. 1d. for making a pair of trousers, and half a guinea for a large cloak. Fan-painters in some cases earn as much as fifteenpence a day, but many of them have to be content with half as much. In Valencia, a considerable number of women are employed weaving plain silks and handkerchiefs, and preparing the silk for the weavers, earning from ten to twelve pence from sunrise to sunset. What proportion they bear to the male workers, we cannot say, Spanish statistics being woefully imperfect. The same must be said of Portugal; all we know of the state of female labour there, being that, in the districts of Aveiro, Leiria, and Coimbra, 157 women obtain their living by bonnet-making; 748 as seamstresses; 83 as dressmakers; 116 as rag-pickers; 20 as thread-makers; 18 as china-polishers; and 59 as washerwomen: in these occupations having no male rivals to contend against. In the manufactories of glass and china, 26 women are employed to 353 men; in paper-making, 104 to 367; in pottery-work, 60 to 269; in firework-making, 23 to 96; in cotton-weaving, 40 to 75; in silk-weaving, 5634 to 6013; in rope-making, 6 to 103; in tallow-chandling, 1 to 3; in toothpick-making, 100 to 180; and in glove-making, 1 to 3. Curiously enough, no women are employed in shoemaking, tailoring, or match-making; but there are 250 female bakers to 564 male ones; and out of a total of 28,137 labourers, nearly one-eighth are women.

#### A LAME CONCLUSION.

I WAS on my way home from a 'Monday pop,' or a Saturday afternoon concert, when my heart was dissolved, and my footstaps were arrested by the sight of a female in distress. She was young, she was attractive in face and figure, and she stood irresolute in Portland Place, crying.

If I had had time for reflection, I should certainly have passed on without taking any notice, for to speak to a young lady without an introduction is a very rash act. To be convicted of doing such a thing, before a London magistrate, would stain one's character very considerably, and there is no knowing what course hysteria might dictate, and an active policeman adopt; it is impossible to be too cautious. But I did not take time to reflect—I acted on the impulse of the moment, and inquired, raising my hat, if I could be of any assistance.

'Oh!' cried the young lady, 'I have lost my aunt.'

'Tut, tut!' I murmured sympathetically.

'She was to have met me at Regent Circus, and the omnibus-man was told to put me down on the right-hand side, where she said that she would be,' continued the young lady. 'I waited for nearly two hours, and then I—I got frightened, and came up here, where it is quieter.'

'And do you not know where your aunt lives?'

'Somewhere in a place called Clapham, not in London. She was coming up expressly to meet me, and said in her letter that she had so often met my cousins in the same place, by the half-past three o'clock omnibus, that we could not possibly miss.'

'May I ask where you have come from?' I inquired.

'Calcutta,' replied she.

'Good gracious!' said I, for I had been on the point of recommending her return. It was a long omnibus ride, not to mention geographical difficulties.

'Oh, how stupid!' she added presently. 'Of course you mean to-day. I have come from Acton to-day. I went there from Southampton, and have staid a week.'

'Had you not better go back to Acton?'

'I should have done so already, if my friends had been still there, but they were to go away an hour after I started.'

Now, for fear you should deem this damsel over-confiding, I must be egotistical, and draw my portrait. Know, then, that I am classically musical, and the fact of my savage breast having been soothed is written on my features. I wear my hair longer than is the fashion nowadays, and keep it well brushed off my interesting brow; spectacles lend an air of respectable sedateness to my face. I dress soberly, and generally carry a roll of music in my hand, because doing so once caused me to be pointed out as a famous composer.

And then, the young lady was so very young, almost a child, and so very ingenious and inexperienced. She trusted me by instinct, which is not a bad guide—sometimes.

'And have you no idea where your aunt intended to take you to when you met?' I asked presently.

'O yes!' she replied—'to the railway station.'

'Which?'

'Are there more than one?'

'Several. Do you not know where the train was to go to?'

'Yes; to Dublin; and from Dublin we were going on to Wicklow, where papa's regiment is.'

Here was a sudden clearing up of difficulties. I pointed out that she would probably find her aunt waiting for her at Euston Square; or that, at any rate, her best plan was to take the Irish mail at a quarter-past seven. She had plenty of time, as it was not more than six o'clock.

Directly she began to see daylight through her troubles, the damsel cheered up, and told me that her luggage had been sent on to the railway station by carrier. Could I tell her how she was to get it?

She looked up at me as she spoke with such big, round, innocent, trustful eyes, that I quite forgot all about the proprieties, called a cab, told the man to drive to Euston Square, put the girl in, and followed. You may blame me as much as you please; I am certain that I was right: the position was a very exceptional one. It is quite beside the

mark to ask me whether I should have taken so much trouble if the child had been plain and uninteresting, for under those circumstances she would not have had the same need of protection. Still, I confess that I felt extremely hot and uncomfortable, and did not dare let the conversation flag for a moment, lest she should be suddenly seized with panic or a sense of awkwardness. However, it never seemed to occur to her that she did not know my name or character, and she chatted on quite easily and pleasantly about herself and her belongings. I did not catch all she said, for the four-wheeler nearly dislocated one's limbs, and sentences were quite disjointed; but from what I gathered, it seemed that her father was major in an infantry regiment, and her mother was with him at Wicklow; that she had four brothers and three sisters, all very much younger than herself; that she alone had been with her parents in India; that these last had gone to the regimental headquarters, to arrange for the accommodation of so large a family; and that there was to be a general meeting, now all was ready. At this point we reached the station.

I was then very glad I had come, for everything was as strange and bewildering to her, as you might suppose it would be to one who had imagined that London had but a single railway terminus. I found her luggage, and saw it duly labelled; I helped her to search for her aunt, and made inquiries after that lady of all the available officials, but without result. Then I persuaded my charge to take some refreshment, and by that time the ticket-windows were opened.

'O dear!' she cried, turning dreadfully pale, 'I never thought of that; I have no money.'

Now, it happened, for a wonder, that there was a crisp new five-pound note in my pocket-book. What could I do but enlist it in the cause?

'Oh, thank you.—What should I have done but for your great kindness?' she said when the guard had banged the carriage-door to. 'Please, where is papa to send the five pounds?'

I gave her my card; she held out her hand to be shaken; there was a shrill whistle, a puffing, a roar, and of the two human straws which had been caught for a moment in an eddy of life's stream, one was swept away again by the current, while the other—well, the other found he was late for dinner, and so determined to have a cut out of the joint at his club, and then turn into the pit of some theatre at half-price.

I walked back to the west end, and passing the top of the Haymarket, my attention was arrested by certain words which I heard at the entrance of the coach-office stationed there.

'You are the man who comes up with the three o'clock omnibus from Acton, and to whom I spoke about that young lady?'

'Yes, ma'am.'

'Well, you have been there, and returned since?'

'Yes, ma'am; and I made inquiries, as you told me. They've all left Roseville Cottage, and the servant in charge said as a young lady did come up by our 'bus.'

'And yet you did not observe her?'

'Well, ma'am, we did not take up at the door, you see, and as there were several young ladies got in and out, I could not pick her exactly.'

'But if she came by the three o'clock omnibus,



how was it that I did not find her in it when it arrived?

'Can't say, I'm sure, ma'am.'

'Was the young lady going by the Irish mail?' I asked, pushing up to the elderly lady, who seemed to be in a state of great distress.

'Yes, sir; O yes!' and she turned to me eagerly.

'Then I think I can tell you how you missed her,' said I. 'You told her to meet you at Regent Circus, did you not? Well, she got out at the other Regent Circus, by Oxford Street, while you waited for her at this. But do not be alarmed; I saw her off by the mail myself.'

As I suspected, this was the aunt, who had made the identical blunder suggested; and I now had a second distressed female on my hands, not so interesting as the other, and coming at a more inconvenient season. The last joint would be out of the room if I delayed long; so I gave her as concise an account of what had happened as possible, pleaded business of the utmost importance, which I really felt dinner to be, and hurried away like a cat from a schoolboy.

In a few days, I received a letter from Major Duckling, acknowledging my great kindness to his daughter, hoping to have the pleasure of thanking me in person some day, and enclosing the five pounds he owed me. I wrote back, saying that the money had come safely, that it had been an honour and a bliss to be of use to Miss Duckling, and that I would certainly look in if I happened to be passing.

A year afterwards, some house-property was left me at Cobbleston, and I had to go and look after it. If you happen to be thinking of paying a visit to that spot, take my advice, and don't. This sounds disinterested; but the fact is that I have found a lunatic to purchase those four desolate tenements, and am therefore free to confess that they are situated in a British Sahara. There are about twenty houses altogether in the place, built in a single row, with a very good road in front. Beyond the road is shingle, and beyond the shingle is the sea, which has retired as far as it could from the place, leaving miles of margin. Shingle, indeed, is the prevailing characteristic of Cobbleston. There are no cliffs or rocks; to right, to left, in front, there is nothing but shingle, wearying the eyes, and wearing out the boots. When, after a terribly long tramp, every step of which threatens dislocation of the ankles, you at last get to the sad sea-waves, you find them repeating nothing but 'Sh-sh-shingle!'

This barren desolation makes the place admirably adapted for rifle-practice, which is perhaps the reason why a *dépôt* battalion is stationed in isolated barracks in the neighbourhood. The recruits are kept out of mischief, and they are taught to shoot. You may see squads of them plunging about in the shifty soil at 'judging-distance' drill; and if the Horse Guards, or the War Office, or whoever's business it is, does not provide them with plenty of boots free of charge, all I can say is, it's a crying shame. But surely the visitor can walk inland, and so reach the downs? He can; the farmers have a fashion of using fish-manure in those parts, but if he likes that sort of odour, the custom will not annoy him. Personally, I very much prefer *asafetida*. The

visitor, then, with a delicate nose, corns, and a constitution requiring exercise, would be wise in keeping to the road. If he turned to the left, and walked straight on, he would come, at the end of a couple of miles, to a martello tower; and then, two miles again farther on, to Portadale, where is a small harbour with occasional yachts in it, a good hotel, a billiard-room—in a word, Civilisation. If he turned to the right, ten minutes' walk would bring him to the barracks.

It was on the second day of my arrival that I made this last discovery, and as I stood gazing with awe upon the barrack entrance, thinking how very much it resembled a prison, and wondering what the sentry, who stood just inside, looking prickly, would do to me if I attempted to enter, the soldier I thus contemplated became suddenly rigid, his murderous-looking weapon flew up to his shoulder, and he made a sort of military point. Then, in a sudden, snatchy, galvanised way, he gave his gun a slap, and held it in front of him; and this, a tall, elderly man in spurs, striped trousers, and frock-coat festooned with broad shoestring, seemed to take as a personal compliment, for he touched his forage-cap, an absurd little head ornament, which did not quite cover the bald patch on the top.

A young lady accompanied the elderly officer, and a young man accompanied the young lady. The youth must have been very fond, for he was got up as if for Ascot; and his shining hat, delicate boots, lavender gloves, and button-hole flower, looked very incongruous in that lonely spot. But the peacock spreads his dazzling tail just as readily in the depths of the lonely forest as on the lordly terrace; and he is right. I do not suppose that an Adonis wants to fascinate more than one at a time with his apparel; and if that one is present, what does the absence of the twenty thousand others matter?

When the trio emerged from the barrack square, the young lady stopped short, looked hard at me, bowed, and then spoke eagerly to the old gentleman in uniform, who at once advanced towards me, and held out his hand.

'My daughter tells me that you are Mr Tweedie, who so kindly came to her assistance when she was lost in London,' said he, and was very civil. So was Miss Duckling. The young man to whom I was introduced tried to follow suit, but failed: it was easy to see that he hated me. He was an ingenuous ensign, and had not yet learned how to conceal his feelings. The cause of his enmity, I need hardly say, was the cordiality of the young lady's manner towards myself.

'So you have left Ireland,' I unnecessarily observed.

'Yes; papa got his step, and was put in command of this *dépôt*.'

'By-the-bye, colonel,' said I, 'what is a *dépôt*? Stores, shades, and *dépôts* have been mysteries to me from my youth.' The solidity of my ignorance excited a smile upon the face of the ensign, but the old soldier sought to enlighten me.

'A *dépôt*? Well, you know—several regiments have their *dépôts* at it.'

'I see,' I falsely asserted.

We had a pleasant walk to some new butts which were being set up; and on our return the colonel and his daughter both declared that I must come and see Mrs Duckling. So I passed through

the barrack-gates with the rest, feeling taller when the sentry presented arms. The colonel took the ensign's arm, and spoke to him aside; the poor youth nodded, and presently afterwards asked me to dine at the mess that evening. I am sure, from the forced character of his smile, that he felt feeding me to be pushing Christianity rather too far.

Then he had to bow himself off, leaving me to enter the home of the beautiful Emma. Neither the beautiful Emma nor her mamma could have been good housewives, for the quarters of the chief were in a terrible mess; and his little ones, who came swarming over us, were a sad contrast to the clean, tidy offspring of the non-commissioned officers that I had noticed playing about. As for the youngest Duckling, a tot that pattered about dragging a fresh herring tied to a bit of string after it as a toy, he was so sticky that I am convinced that a fly alighting on him would have been lamed.

The furniture was scanty and common, and no attempt had been made to set things off. We found Mrs Duckling lying on a sofa reading a novel. She had been a handsome woman in her time, there could be no doubt of that, and she had the best part of beauty, a kind, feminine, good-tempered expression, left. She greeted me with much cordiality, and evidently thought a great deal of my having paid her daughter's fare. 'Civility I have met with myself, over and over again,' said she; 'but five pounds from an utter stranger—never!'

I liked her, she was so thoroughly unaffected; they were poor, but she seemed to think that rather a joke than otherwise.

'I will not ask you to dinner,' said she; 'we dine early, because of the children. If you are hungry at any time about one o'clock, and can eat cold meat and rice-pudding, we shall be glad to see you; but do not expect to be asked. When the colonel cannot stand our fare any longer, he goes to the mess.'

It is very pleasant to be made much of, and the Ducklings were so agreeable that I stopped at Cobbleston a few days longer than was strictly necessary. I must confess that I took a mischievous pleasure in exciting the jealous wrath of the ensign, and this appeared to be shared by the fair Emma. At least she certainly acted in a manner which was likely to pique him, paid more attention to what I said when we were together, and seemed to prefer walking with me; but I cannot put into words the many little perceptible though undefinable shades of conduct which were calculated to depress him and encourage me. I was glad not to be forced upon the poor youth as a nominal—I say nominal, because, doubtless, I really dined at the colonel's expense—as a nominal guest again. On the second day, I was made an honorary member of the mess—a graceful act, for it is really difficult to get a dinner at Cobbleston. At the end of the week, however, I was forced to go, and when I announced the fact to the Ducklings, they were so dumfounded, that it was more than flattering—it was quite touching.

The time was just after morning parade, and the family party was complete. The colonel was writing an official letter to squash a court-martial, telling the members that they must find something to say more in accordance with his own private opinion; Mrs Duckling was reposing on the sofa, rumpiling the hair of one of her littles ones who

sat on the floor beside her; Emma was winding wool; and the ensign, who had not changed his uniform, sat bolt upright in front of her, holding the skein, his legs under his chair, his eyes looking unutterable things at his charmer, who was opposite, and so close. Her hand touched his occasionally, and then he positively coloured.

'And why must you go?' asked Mrs Duckling with her voice, and Miss Emma with her eyes. The colonel, too, was arrested, pen in air; the ensign's lips parted.

'Well, the fact is, my fourth child has got a rash, and my wife is rather uneasy,' said I.

'Fourth child!'

'Wife!'

'Yes. Did you not know that I was a married man?'

I wonder whether the Ducklings really took me for a bachelor with intentions? I only know that their manner when I took leave was not so cordial as it had been; that the ensign drove me over to the station in a brother-officer's dog-cart, and that he wrung my hand at parting with such cordiality that his signet-ring nearly drew blood.

#### MOSELEKATSE.

MOSELEKATSE was the chief of the Matabele, an important South African tribe, whose country lies north of the Orange River, and one of the most distinct and remarkable personages with whom the records of missionary labours have made us acquainted.\* Savages are for the most part vague, and have a pervading family likeness among them; but this particular savage was impressive in his individuality. Of course he had a favourite enemy, a rival chieftain, named Sekhome; and equally, of course, he assumed that all strangers who desired to visit his territory were emissaries of Sekhome; and when Mr Moffat, familiarly known in vast regions of the African continent as 'Yonie,' announced his intention of entering the country of the Matabele, it was in vain that he declared he had no political mission or intention. Moselekatse would not listen to it. 'Yonie' should not come there accompanied by 'Sekhome's missionary.' The latter objectionable person was the well-known African missionary, Mr Mackenzie, who had passed a year in Sekhome's country. Mr Moffat and his friend had a hard time of it. They had advanced into Matabele territory, not apprehending any obstacle on the part of the chief, just far enough to find themselves without water for themselves, their men, and their oxen. 'Make haste and milk some of Sekhome's cows for Sekhome's missionary,' said the humorous chief, when he heard of their dilemma; 'for he must be hungry after so long a journey.' One of his wives remarked: 'What crimes do these white men commit, which cause them to flee from their own country in this way?'—a very pertinent and clever question, from the lady's point of view.

A messenger was despatched with a humble petition to the autocratic Zulu; and the manner of his return was ludicrously punctilious, reminding us of that ever-famous occasion when the Bornean

\* *Ten Years North of the Orange River, a Story of Everyday Life and Work among the South African Tribes.* By John Mackenzie. Edinburgh: Edmonstone and Douglas.

chief, Gasing, gave a state reception, *en grande tenue*, wearing the regalia, consisting of a tin dish-cover, displayed on his stomach. 'The messenger returned,' says Mr Mackenzie, 'his feet and legs covered with dust, but with a smiling countenance. Instead of delivering his message to us, as we expected, he passed us without a word of greeting, and sitting down before his fellow-soldier—who was, I suppose, his superior—he narrated to him the reply which the chief had sent. After he had fully mastered the report, the head man of the two now addressed us, and announced that I was to come on, but where was my present to the chief, and that of Mr J. Moffat? He had not seen them.' This was propitious; so they pushed on to court; and on the next Sunday, Mr Moffat preached in Setebele to a congregation hardly encouraging. All but two old men walked off before the discourse was concluded, and the two demanded 'tusho,' which means 'a reward for good conduct,' for having remained. The Matabele are a really brave, as well as a quarrelsome people, the soldiers are orderly, and the officers are polite. The great majority of them had their bodies marked somewhere with cuts of the spear or battle-axe. The next afternoon the travellers reached the camp of Moselekatse, but were not immediately admitted to his august presence. The scene was curious, and not wanting in picturesqueness. The camp was struck at the foot of a mountain, in a fertile place, near a large village. 'The chief's four wagons were drawn up near to each other; behind these were the temporary huts of his harem and servants, closed in by a hedge of thorn branches; and in front, a large pen for cattle, and another for sheep and goats.' Moselekatse never 'settled' anywhere. He had all the care and misgiving which are said to accompany sovereignty in civilised lands, and was like Oliver Cromwell in one respect, at least, that he was constantly moving about. When all was settled and comfortable, he would suddenly issue an order—the wagons were to be packed, and the oxen yoked; and before any but a few of the chief attendants knew whither they were going, the wagons would be moving, and the temporary huts left in a blaze. The old chief was frightfully suspicious and superstitious; and his craving for new encampments and fresh green boughs for his fences was no doubt a result of his abject faith in charms and spells. His enemies were supposed to be constantly at work to bewitch him, and bring about his death. The removal of his camp to new quarters was supposed to break all the local spells; which, of course, began again with the fresh settlement. The name of Moselekatse, himself a slave to fear of the lowest kind, was a terror far and near. He had the usual hazy geographical notions of an African chief, and until the day of his death, he believed Kuruman and England to be the same place, and near to it, seated in an old-fashioned arm-chair, was Moselekatse. As we advanced, we got each a warm and

rather lengthy shake of the hand; the attendants shouting lustily: "Great king! great man-eater!" We took our places on the ground opposite the arm-chair, and had a full view of its occupant. We saw a frail old man, so frail that he could not stand by himself, or walk a single step. His legs were paralysed; his arms moved with difficulty, and in a spasmodic manner; his head was gray, and his face bore the wrinkles of old age. The only clothing of the chief consisted of an English blanket brought loosely round his loins, and a naval officer's cap on his head. An old greatcoat served as a footstool, and was removed with his chair when the chief desired to change his position. Moselekatse had a good face, and the largest eyes I have ever seen in an African face. If we were in the presence of one who could listen unmoved to prayers for justice and mercy, there was nothing to notify the fact. Some of his wives sat near their lord. We were presented with boyalva, or native beer, in a drinking-vessel neatly woven of grass; and the women held elegant spoons, also made of grass, for skimming away flies from the beer. The reception of the visitors was tolerably gracious.

This mild-looking old man was one of the most desperate and relentless savages in existence—an Attila in his way, and within his sphere; a fierce military despot, a terrible slave-holder, a man of enormous power, obstinacy, courage, and will. He was the son of a Zulu chief, and spent his youth in what is now the colony of Natal. Fifty years ago, his tribe was conquered by Tshaka, the great chief of the Zulus, who was just then 'eating up' all the inhabitants of that region. This fierce despot soon discovered the qualities of his captive, and made him a captain in his army, in which capacity the young fellow played a part somewhat analogous to that for which history and fiction have awarded so much praise to the Plantagenet prince. He worked zealously in Tshaka's interests until he had secured the affection of his men, and then he undertook a raid on a distant tribe, executed it successfully, and instead of returning with the captives and the cattle, he hastened northward, placing the Drakenberg Mountains between him and his master. From that moment his career was Napoleonic—without the Elba and the Waterloo. He entered the district which is now known as the Transvaal Republic, and found it in the possession of unwarlike tribes of the Bechuana people. They fled before him; and he took their territory and their property, and ultimately reduced them all to complete subjection. The next enemy who turned up was the successor of Tshaka, who despatched large war-parties against him, in vain. But when the emigrant Dutch colonists, in detached parties, each 'fighting for his own hand,' took to molesting, and on one occasion defeated him, Moselekatse thought he had better enlarge his borders, and left the Transvaal country, pressing northward, with the intention of crossing the Zambesi. But the deadly tsetse detained him on the southern bank of the river; and then came an incident like one of those terrible stories of filial treachery which are told in the sacred Scriptures. 'One of his sons remained behind upon the march, thinking to imitate Moselekatse's early example, and, at the head of his own men, to become an independent chief. He and every one of his followers paid for their attempt with their lives.'



Then the terrible invader settled in the country of the industrious Makshona and Makalala, whom he destroyed as ruthlessly and completely as he had destroyed the Bechuanas; and here he signalled his conquest by a deed of consummate atrocity. Finding that his soldiers were attracted and softened by the Makalala young women, he ordered the men to put the girls to death—a command which they dared not hesitate to obey. This massacre struck terror to the hearts of the people, and the despot was thenceforth supreme. Once more some adventurous Dutchmen pursued Moselekatse, and a precise repetition of the former occurrence was the result. The Dutchmen had a temporary success, followed by an overwhelming defeat. They never tried it again. This victory is a precious tradition among the Matabele. 'One man,' says Mr Mackenzie, 'shewed me wounds which he had received on the occasion; another wiry little fellow imitated the way in which he had rushed upon a Dutchman who was loading his gun, wrestled with him, and put him to death. It is quite an accomplishment among these people to be able to mimic successfully the various cries of distress which are heard upon the field of battle. Young men especially were disagreeably demonstrative in this way; older soldiers were in general quieter, allowing the hacks and cuts about their head and body to testify to their prowess.'

During Moselekatse's residence in the Transvaal country, Mr Moffat visited him twice, and the chieftain listened to the missionary's exposition of the Christian religion with interest and approbation. There is reason to believe, however, that private friendship for Yonie had more to do with Moselekatse's 'conversion' than the 'profound admiration' with which his doctrine inspired the Zulu chief—as we find Mr Mackenzie naively remarking that these sentiments 'produced little or no effect upon his outward conduct.' This was in 1836; and in 1855, Mr Moffat visited his friend in his new territory, and thus a wagon-track was made to this hitherto unpenetrated region. It is the opinion of all 'natives' that if a country is to remain unknown to Englishmen, a wagon must not be permitted to traverse it. The road to the Matabele furnished an illustration of the truth of their saying: 'Where one wagon goes, another is sure to follow.' In 1857, Mr Moffat again visited Moselekatse, and obtained his consent to the establishment of a mission among his people; and, in 1859, he returned with three other missionaries. Since then, the track they made has become a frequented road, upon which the wagons of hunters and traders are to be found at all seasons.

Moselekatse was possessed of an unusually large share of that sort of disconcerting good sense which is so characteristic of savages. He had an immense admiration for Englishmen, unaccompanied by any notion of what or where England was; admiration which, as Mr Mackenzie justly remarks, 'could not have long survived the advent of the "mixed" society which has recently found its way into his country.' He agreed to the establishment of the mission, and sent orders for the visitors to approach his encampment; and, after a delay of several months, he granted them interpreters, and they began to preach to the Matabele. There are few more comical 'mission' stories

than the following: 'The first services were held in the large cattle-pen of the town, and were attended by great numbers of soldiers. Moselekatse was always present, and shewed his knowledge of the Sechuana language, and the doctrines of the Word of God, as previously taught him by Mr Moffat, by occasionally interrupting the interpreter, and helping him with the right word. As every utterance of Moselekatse is applauded, these corrections were received with the usual demonstrations, every soldier present shouting out "Great king! great man-eater!" in the middle of the sermon. The chief also considered himself bound once or twice to express his dissent from the doctrines which were proclaimed. For instance, when the missionary said that God would hear the prayer of the poorest people as soon as that of the greatest kings—"That's a lie!" interjected Moselekatse, who by no means approved of the doctrine; and the emendation of the chief was received with shouts of applause. As he found, however, that his disapprobation did not alter the preaching, and that in every discourse there was something unpleasant for him to hear, he gave up attending public worship; but his outward friendliness to the missionaries suffered no abatement.'

Rigid etiquette was observed at the court of the chief, and the missionaries had a great deal of trouble in establishing their exemption from crouching down in his presence, which was the form of salutation exacted from the soldiers—and also their right to sit on camp-stools at his 'receptions'—to which solemn festivities, the only women admitted were two or three of his wives, who stood humbly behind his chair. By degrees these difficulties were surmounted, and it was arranged that white men were to rank in the country as 'sons of Moselekatse.' This was a great honour and a solid advantage, as the soldiers did not venture to molest or bully them. A boisterous soldier haggling over a bargain, would pull himself up at the slightest reminder, and say submissively: 'Child of the king, just a few more beads, and I will go away!'

At the court of Moselekatse, 'feeding-time' was four o'clock in the afternoon. The proceedings, though very much less disgusting than those described on similar occasions by Captains Grant and Speke, Sir Samuel Baker, and Captain Burton, were not very pleasant. The cattle which furnished material for the meal were killed in the morning, and the beef stewed all day in a pot, the lid of which is kept closely sealed with cow-dung. The meat was always very tender and rich. The following was the order of the royal repasts: 'The cook having announced to the chief that dinner was ready, received from him minute orders how to dispose of it. First of all, a certain portion was brought to Moselekatse himself, in a dish which had been just before handed to the cook by one of the wives. This wooden vessel, in which the chief always ate his meat, was never washed, and never removed from his immediate neighbourhood. These precautions were taken on account of the prevailing fear of witchcraft. The congealed fat at the bottom of the dish was at least an inch in thickness. White men who visited Moselekatse at this auspicious hour, were always invited to dine; a portion was ordered for them in a separate dish, and what they did not eat, they were expected to send to their wagons. Nothing was to

be returned. While the visitors were eating, the cook and his assistants handed round the immense dishes of beef to the various companies of soldiers present, each shouting out their thanks when the dish was placed before them. No one may use a knife, except the chief, his family, and the white men. But the Matabele do very well without knives. The soldier who is next to the dish seizes, with both hands, one of the large pieces of beef into which the oxen have been cut, and pulls off as much as he can with his teeth. What comes off is his.

This is a very degrading incident in the Matabele customs; in most other respects, they are superior to their brethren of South Africa. The intensely aggressive spirit of the people, fostered by the tastes and the history of Moselekatse, constitutes them an essentially military tribe, and therefore lays them open to certain civilising influences, such as order, discipline, and cohesion, which may be turned to valuable uses. An authentic report of the condition of the Matabele at the present time, under the rule of the usurper, for the son of Moselekatse was not suffered to succeed him (he was called Kuruman as a special compliment to England!), would be an interesting corollary to Mr Mackenzie's account of the great chief, who seems to have been as odd a jumble of discordant characteristics as one meets among one's familiar acquaintances every day, or finds in looking into one's self! As in all other military despotisms, war was a necessary part of the Matabele scheme of society. 'In order,' says Mr Mackenzie, 'to secure the continued allegiance of his men, Moselekatse had to devise work for them in which they would meet with the gratification of their savage passions. The clamour to be led forth to pillage, outrage, and bloodshed never ceased to issue from men forced to live under the restraints of Matabele barracks.'

With all this, there is ample testimony to the fact, that the chief whose *raison d'être* was this terrible condition of things, was a man of tender feelings, and keenly alive to the sufferings of others. Of him alone, among recorded savages, do we find it stated that he had any compassion for animals. Mr Mackenzie says: 'Moselekatse would not permit his oxen to be lashed with the long whip of the wagon-driver; his men were allowed to beat them only with green wands cut from the bushes in the forests.' The master-spirit which pervaded and regulated the dreadful tribal wars, had a strange strain of gentleness and softness in it. When one of the missionaries, Mr Thomas, on his way to Natal, after his wife's death, brought his children to take leave of the chief, he cried out, with every evidence of real feeling: 'Take the poor motherless dear ones to the wagon; I cannot bear the sight!' There is no parallel in the history of African savages to this story; indeed, they have few dialects, so far as they are known, which contain any words of endearment or compassion. No more complete military despotism than his ever existed; and his absolute rule had some picturesque and romantic features, reminding one of the dim and terrible stories of oriental power. One day, a small wiry man was introduced to Mr Mackenzie by one of the missionaries at Inyate. He was asked where he had been the night before, and with a smile, he mentioned the name of a certain village. He had sharp

restless eyes, singularly thin lips, a wide mouth, and large white teeth. He was one of the chief's executioners, and from the frequency of his domiciliary visits, he was called 'the king's knife.' Waiting in the neighbourhood until his victim has drunk the last cup of beer, he gives him time to fall into that stupor of sleep and drunkenness from which he is never to awake. 'The chief's knife,' says Mr Mackenzie, 'has his assistants, who are in readiness to "mak' sicker" any bloody work, for Moselekatse could not carry on his paternal administration with only one "knife."'

When Mr Mackenzie last saw the great chief of the Matabele, he was very ill, and begged for medicine. But 'Sekhome's missionary' was just starting for a new station, and it would have been hazardous to have dosed Moselekatse just then. Any effect of the medicine would have been ascribed to witchcraft and poisoning. Besides, the old man's disease was practically incurable.

'I have no medicine which could make you better,' said Mr Mackenzie to the dying chief.

'Would you tell that to your own father if he were in my position to-day?' pleaded the old man. In that final interview there is a strange touch of the innate dignity of Moselekatse, one little trait of infinite separation between him and every other African savage of whom we have ever read. As Mr Mackenzie entered the yard, he was informed by an attendant that 'he must not be offended; the chief's heart was white towards him, but there would be no shaking hands in greeting that day.' He soon saw the reason; the old man had no power to move his arms from where he lay.

In 1868, Moselekatse died. His son, Kuruman, who had been sent away, secretly, to be educated, and saved from assassination, could not be found. The succession is still in course of bloody dispute. It will hardly be settled in favour of so remarkable a man as the Zulu warrior, concerning whom we may quote that famous summing up—'There are those who are too bad for blessing, and too good for banning, like Rob Roy.'

#### SONNET.

THE loud day yields unto the silent night  
With meek submission; as the roseate bloom  
That tints the heavens beyond the western height,  
Dies gradual down into the general gloom.  
Huge and Alp-like, a deeper shade in shade,  
The eastern hills that upward swell and heave—  
That darkly heave and swell, and will not fade—  
Stand out embossed upon the front of eve.  
Heaven's lights are out, and stars that one by one  
Stole forth so timidly at twilight's hour,  
Blaze bold and fearless now. The Unseen Power,  
Perfecting Nature's law, works on and on;  
And one more day, on fleet and hasty wings,  
Is hurried to the bourne of bygone things.

On 5th August will be commenced an Original Novel,  
entitled

#### CECIL'S TRYST.

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